DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 451 512 CS 217 462

AUTHOR Spagnoli, Diane L.
TITLE The Effectiveness of Two Spelling Instruction Methods at the Second Grade Level.
PUB DATE 2001-04-00
NOTE 47p.; M.A. Research Project, Kean University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Grade 2; *Instructional Effectiveness; Primary Education; *Spelling; *Spelling Instruction; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

The goal of this study was to determine if spelling instruction was more effective when the words presented followed a general spelling pattern or when the words were randomly chosen with no correlation to spelling generalizations. In this six-week study, the spelling performance on pre and post spelling tests of nine boys and seven girls in grade two was investigated. The results suggested that both spelling instruction approaches were successful in assisting children to learn spelling words. (Contains 49 references and 2 tables of data. Appendixes contain spelling lists and 2 charts of data.) (Author/RS)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 451 512

The Effectiveness of Two Spelling Instruction Methods at the Second Grade Level

By

Diane L. Spagnoli

Accepted 3/19/01

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the Masters of Arts Degree
in Reading Specialization
At Kean University, Union, NJ
April 2001

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
D. L. Spagnoli
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

CS 217 462

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks goes to my husband for not only believing in me but for his limitless fortitude, understanding, and encouragement during this arduous venture. I could not have produced this hard copy without the guidance, and assistance from my daughters, Nicole and Lindsay, and my future son-in-law, Jeff. Their patience and support was countless. Mom and Dad, thanks for instilling in me the importance of education and the desire to achieve. To my colleagues, Sue, Carolyn and Lisa, thanks for being my back up during each and every crisis. Your friendship guided me through every step of this endeavor. Many thanks to my best friend Trish, for persuading me to pursue my career in education. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Albert Mazurkiewicz for guiding me through the thesis process.

ABSTRACT

The goal of this study was to determine if spelling instruction was more effective when the words presented followed a general spelling pattern or when the words were randomly chosen with no correlation to spelling generalizations. In this six-week study, the spelling performance on pre and post spelling tests of nine-second grade boys and seven-second grade girls was investigated. The results suggested that both spelling instruction approaches were successful in assisting children to learn spelling words.

Table of Contents

I. The Effectiveness of Two Spelling Instruction Methods at the Second Grade Level

Introduction 1

Hypothesis 3

Procedure 3

Results 5

Conclusion and Implications 6

II. Related Research 8
The Effectiveness of Two Spelling Instruction Methods At the Second Grade Level

III. References 27

IV. Appendices

Appendix A 31

Appendix B 32

Appendix C 33

Appendix D 34

Appendix E 35

Appendix F 36

Appendix G 37

Appendix H 38

Appendix I 39

Spelling instruction is one of the most debated topics in the field of language arts. It is a concern among both educators and parents. Much of this concern has do with the perception that students are misspelling many more words in their writing then they used to (Sabey, 1997).

Spelling, which is "the process of converting oral language to visual form by placing graphic symbols on some writing surface" (Hodges, 1984) is regarded as a time-consuming and arduous task (Hodges, 1984). According to Henderson & Beers (1980), it is a cognitive, developmental process closely related to language and literacy learning (Rhymer & Williams 2000). It is the belief of many educators that spelling proficiency can be achieved as naturally and effortlessly as learning how to speak (Krashen, 1989;Wilde, 1990b).

Traditionally spelling is taught as a whole group activity where all students are expected to master the same group of words regardless of their literacy level (Zutell, 1998). Within the classroom, student's spelling instructional levels vary much in the same way reading instructional levels differ (Horn, 1969; Manolakes, 1975; Morris, Nelson, & Perney, 1986). In the past, most people believed that because English spelling did not do a good job of representing the pronunciation of words, primary instructional emphasis was placed upon rote memory (Horn, 1969). In light of our current knowledge of the reading process and our greater understanding of how learners acquire word knowledge for use in all literacy activities, in the last twenty years these approaches have come into question (Zutell, 1998). Educators now understand that, although memory does play an

important role in learning to spell, it is not the only component (Henderson, 1990). Learning to spell involves not only learning about the interrelationships of components of words but also learning about written language in everyday use (Hodges, 1984). As Hanna, Hanna, Hodges, and Rudorf (1966) discovered many years ago, when the speller recognizes how patterns work, the ability to spell correctly increases because the speller has more information to assist in generating the conventional spelling of a word (Templeton & Morris, 1999).

Researchers have recently discovered what they call the five "developmental levels" of children's spelling abilities. Based on their findings, they determined that they disagreed with the traditional way in which spelling is addressed in the primary grades (Beers, 1980;Beers & Beers, 1980; Forester, 1980;Gentry, 1978,1981,1982a, 1982b; Gentry & Henderson, 1978; Read, 1971; Zutell, 1979, 1980). Forester (1980) interprets these findings to indicate that children should receive no formal spelling instruction until they reach developmental level five, which is until they have learned to spell words correctly. Formal instruction can begin only after children have progressed through all of the developmental stages (Gentry, 1982b). This developmental spelling research provides teachers with an understanding of spelling acquisition with implications for spelling instruction, including word selection, instructional routines and provisions for individual differences (Nelson, 1989). Nelson (1989) also purports that teachers need to be more informed and should be schooled in the demands of the English spelling.

The primary goal of spelling instruction is to enable students to broaden their knowledge of the principles of English orthography and to amass a wide range of strategies to assist them when they encounter words they don't know how to spell (Dudley-Marling, 1997). However, studies indicate a wide array of approaches and philosophies and thus educators are faced with the dilemma of how to achieve this goal. A variety of approaches need to be examined for efficacy.

Hypothesis

Two such strategies will be examined in this study. For purposes of this study, it was hypothesized that second grade students when receiving spelling instruction using words that are related (word families, all long "a" words, etc.) will perform better on spelling tests than when receiving spelling instruction using unrelated words (commonly misspelled words which follow no patterns).

Procedures

A total of 16 second-grade students (9 boys, 7 girls) participated in this study. All of the students were from the same class in a suburban predominantly white school district with multiple degrees of academic achievement. However, no students were classified. They all spoke English as their native language.

There were a total of one hundred and twenty spelling words used in this study. Sixty spelling words were randomly selected from List 94, Spelling Demons – Elementary (p. 259) found in the Reading Teacher's Book of Lists, Third Edition, 1993 (See Appendix G). The other sixty spelling words consisted of twenty short vowel "o" words, twenty short vowel "u" words and twenty words with long vowels formed by using the magic e (silent e) chosen by the teacher (See Appendices A – F). Spelling lists were alternated each week; beginning with short vowel o words and then the next week commonly misspelled words from Spelling Demons and then back to the words that followed a pattern for a period of six weeks.

On Monday, the children were given a pre-test. Tests were corrected and returned to the children that day (See Appendix H). For homework, children wrote the words they spelled incorrectly on the pre-test three times each. Throughout the rest of the week and for homework children were presented with various word exposure activities. Spelling words were written in alphabetical order on Tuesday, collected and corrected and returned the next day. Homework on Tuesday night consisted of writing spelling sentences for all words misspelled on the pre-test. The Wednesday activity consisted of using the "Making Words" strategy to identify and reinforce spelling patterns. Homework that night was using the cloze procedure to identify the missing spelling word. A spelling bee was conducted on Thursday incorporating this week's spelling words and words from previous spelling units. Unscrambling spelling words was

Thursday night's homework assignment. Finally, on Friday post spelling tests were administered. The spelling test was administered using the following procedure: The teacher said each word alone, in a sentence, and then alone again. Then the students wrote the spelling word. Tests were collected, corrected, and returned on Monday (See Appendix I).

Results

Table I illustrates the results of comparing the pre-test of spelling words taught with a specific spelling pattern to the pre-test of frequently misspelled words or random words. With a t of +5.48, it can be seen that there is a highly significant difference below the .01 level between the two pre-tests. This difference indicates that the sample group tested much better on the pre-test of words which followed a specific spelling pattern than on the pre-test of commonly misspelled or random spelling words.

Table I

Means, Standard Deviations and t of the
Patterned Pre-Test and the Random Pre –Test

Sample	M	SD	t
Patterned Pre-Test	226.56	36.27	+5.48
Random Pre-Test	133.13	57.76	

Sig.<.01 level

Table II describes the results of comparing the two post-tests. As indicated by the t of -.32, the difference between the two post-tests was not significant. Although the sample group performed better on the post-test measuring the spelling of frequently misspelled or random words, these findings indicate no major differences.

Table II

Means, Standard Deviations and t of the
Patterned Post-Test and the Random Post-Test

Sample	M	SD	t
Patterned Post-Test	285.00	17.61	-.32
Random Post-Test	287.06	19.18	

No significant difference

Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to determine if instruction of spelling words with a similar pattern would be more effective than instruction of words chosen at random that demonstrated no particular spelling blueprint. The findings indicate no significant differences among the spelling scores of students tested under both conditions.

However, when the pre-tests of both control groups are compared, the results indicate that the students scored significantly higher on the pre-test of patterned words when compared to the scores on the pre-test of words chosen at random. These findings suggest that the children were either more familiar with the patterned words or had already been exposed to the sound/symbol relationships emphasized. This exposure then enabled the children to apply the skills they had acquired, which resulted in higher scores on the pre-test of words with a pattern.

There is also strong evidence when analyzing this data that teachers need to recognize that children need not only to be exposed to various phonics generalizations but also be given many opportunities to encounter and employ words that do not fall into the conventional rules and principles of spelling.

Both of the theoretical perspectives in spelling instruction highlighted in this study afford teachers with a framework to examine the spelling instruction practices used in their classroom and heighten their awareness that a diverse array of strategies should be implemented into spelling programs to meet the needs of all students in the classroom.

When comparing the post-tests of the patterned words and the words chosen at random, the findings indicate that there was no significant difference in the scores. On the basis of this information, this study concludes that both methods of spelling instruction are effective strategies in helping children increase their spelling proficiency.

The Effectiveness of Two Spelling Instruction Methods
At the Second Grade Level:

Related Research

Spelling has always been a significant concern among researchers, educators, and parents. Much of this concern is based on observations of children's misspellings in their writings by both parents and educators rather than on documentation ((Sabey, 1997). The only reason we learn to spell is so that we can accurately transmit our ideas onto paper and this cannot be achieved without phonological and orthographic knowledge (Hanna, Moore, 1953). In our society, individuals are required to possess proficient spelling skills in order to achieve success in their chosen profession. A lack of these skills often results in embarrassment and can adversely affect ones educational and professional growth. For centuries, mastery of spelling has been the decisive factor of an educated person (Heald-Taylor, B. Gail, 1998). Spelling proficiency was considered "the bedrock of literacy, the barometer of intelligence, the measure of our schools' success" (Templeton, 1992B, p. 454). Consequently, due to the great importance of spelling proficiency, spelling instruction in the classroom has become a top priority and along with reading and mathematics is treated as one of the most important subjects (Graves, 19945). However, "Learning to spell is a difficult and frustrating undertaking for many students, and any guidance teachers can give them regarding effective strategies for studying spelling would make a painful task easier" (Omrod & Jenkins, p. 643, 1989). Although research throughout the years has impacted greatly on spelling theories and practices, we still have not found the answers we need. Therefore,

one of the most debated issues in the language arts community still is "What is the best way to provide spelling instruction?

In the late 1700's, it was believed that learning to spell was driven by rote memorization, that is, that words were learned individually, alienated from logic, and without any attention to the sequences of letters (Nelson, 1989). Rote memorization was deemed the appropriate spelling strategy because at that time most people believed that English spelling did not do a good job of representing the pronunciation of words (Horn, 1969). However, memory is not enough to make spelling meaningful and lasting (Bloodgood, 1991). Memory does have its place in learning to spell, but it does not play the *only* role (Henderson, 1990). Traditionally, spelling was taught as a whole class activity, in a separate block of time, using specific spelling textbooks, which provided no opportunity to make any connection between spelling, reading and writing. Furthermore, no consideration was given to an individual's literacy level (Zutell, 1998).

The period between 1840 and 1950 began to place emphasis on the visual memory theory of spelling. Mann's studies, supported by Horn, highlighted the visual memorization of words as a whole and the idea that learning to spell was secondary to written communication (Nelson, 1989). Words were learned one at a time and learning one word did not guarantee that you would be able to spell another similar word. In other words, you could not use spelling generalizations to assist in spelling of unfamiliar words (Horn, 1957, Hillerich, 1987).

In the 1950's, Hanna and his colleagues disputed the claim that there was no consistency of the letter-to-sound relationship in the English language. As a result of their investigations, the practice of teaching common spelling generalizations was initiated and the patterned sequences of letters became the building blocks of instruction (Nelson, 1989). According to proponents of this generalization principle "Word groups were examined for patterns of behavior; once the pupil had learned the phoneme-grapheme pattern in a few words, he could spell other words that contained the same pattern: (Hanna, Hodges, Hanna, p. 77, 1971).

Traditional theories and practices came into question in the 1970's with the research and findings of Charles Read. Read examined how children learn to spell. "By now, most people agreed that learning to spell is a complex, intricate cognitive and linguistic process rather than one of rote memorization. The "empty vessel" theory was challenged by research suggesting that learners actively form basic concepts about how words work" (Heald-Taylor, B. Gail, 1998, p.404). Read observed how children from four to eight tried to make sense of the world around them by using their intuitive knowledge of the phonetic features of English in combination with their knowledge of letter names to spell words. Read concluded that spelling was developmental.

Inspired by Read's work, Henderson and his colleagues Beers, Gentry, Morris, Nelson, Perney, Schlagal, Templeton, and Zutell examined students changing understandings of how words work. " Work that led to developmental stages of

spelling grew out of Piagetian theory and the notion that aspects of cognitive development proceed by way of qualitative stagelike change" (Gentry, 2000, p. 318). Henderson categorized these concepts into five stages of spelling knowledge through which all successful learners pass. His first stage is labeled the preliterate period. At this stage, he stated that children use what they have learned about stories and writing, and their knowledge of the names of letters and how to write letters to subconsciously attempt to establish relationships between marks or scribbles they make on paper and the sounds of English (Henderson, Templeton, 1986). Letter-name spellers, the second stage, is that period of time when children begin to spell alphabetically, matching letters to sounds in a left to right sequence. Also, vowels appear consistently. At this time, these children are also beginning formal reading instruction and are beginning to develop a sight vocabulary, from which children begin to learn the ways in which the spelling system represents speech. They are also ready at this time to begin a formal spelling program. (Henderson, Templeton, 1986). The third developmental spelling stage is labeled the within word pattern. These children can examine, compare, and contrast vowel patterns. Long vowels are identified, although not always accurately. Also, at this time, children begin to deal with the role of meaning in spelling. This occurs through the children's exposure to compound words and homophones. (Henderson, Templeton, 1986). Stage four, syllable juncture, is the time when students begin to understand the rationale that guides spelling where syllables are joined together. Finally, when students

become derivational constancy spellers they realize that "words that are related in meaning are often spelled similarly" (Templeton, 1983, p. 10). Developmental research has provided us with a framework for the skills and sequence of skills to be taught effectively without relying strictly on rote memory. These achievements have not drastically revised the theories of traditional spelling instruction. Instead they have clarified those things that are important and emphasized the need for word study principles in the middle and upper grades (Henderson, Templeton, 1986). Henderson's conception of spelling development not only considers the history and structure of language but also takes into account what the child's mind brings to the spelling task (Calfee, 1982; Calfee & Drum, 1986; Henderson, 1985).

Over time, continued research has provided a vast data bank of information, which has contributed to the refinement of the labels and characteristics of each of the stages of development. However, each of these newer models still resembles the first basic model. In 1982, Gentry provided us with fives stages of invented spelling. Each stage demonstrates how the speller conceptualizes the spelling of a word as spelling development proceeds. Each stage illustrates what the speller does and doesn't know. Also, at each of these stages the way in which a child is thinking differs and changes as they progress through each of the stages of spelling development (Gentry, 2000). Gentry called his first stage the precommunicative stage. The child at this time is putting letters together but is not thinking about matching letters to specific sounds. At the second stage,

the semiphonetic stage, the child has come to realize that letters correspond to sounds. Spelling of words at this stage match some but not all sounds to letters. The phonetic or third stage is the time when a speller listens to the sounds in a word and then matches a letter to each sound. At the next stage, transitional, the speller does not use phonics to spell a word but relies on letter patterns and sequences seen in print. Finally, a child reaches the conventional stage where it is said that the speller has now acquired full knowledge of the basic rules of English spelling. The child accumulates this knowledge as he passes through each of the stages of development. From this point on, the speller expands his knowledge about words and spelling patterns (Gentry, 2000).

In 1998, Bear and Templeton formulated another developmental model. However, Gentry disputed their model and states that "they identify stages that, in my view, may be better characterized as descriptions of invented spellings within stages, not spelling stages themselves" (Gentry, 2000, p. 323). Stages one through three in both Gentry's model and Bear and Templeton's model are basically the same. However, the discrepancies lie in final stages. In Bear and Templeton's model stage four is labeled within-word pattern, syllable juncture is stage five and they have a sixth stage entitled derivational constancy. Both models agree that these three patterns appear in children's invented spellings. But in Gentry's model, within word, syllable juncture, and derivational constancy are not considered as stages because they are qualitatively the same and are viewed as functions of the type of word being spelled, not a function of a stage

of spelling. There is no stage that corresponds to these patterns (Gentry, 2000). Gentry states, "while within-word pattern, syllable juncture pattern, and derivational constancy pattern word studies are needed at an appropriate time in the speller's development, they may not be "a developmental stage through which learners pass" based on knowledge corresponding to alphabet, pattern, and meaning" (Gentry, 2000, p. 325).

As evidenced by continued research spelling competency is developmental. These guidelines pose important implications for the classroom. Findings in developmental spelling research opened the doors for educators to provide developmentally focused, engaging literacy instruction (Gentry, 2000).

So exactly when should formal spelling instruction begin? According to Forester (1980), children should receive no formal spelling instruction until they have reached stage five. Gentry (1982) concurs with Forester declaring that children are only ready for formal spelling instruction after they have progressed through the five developmental stages of spelling. Researchers conclude that while children are progressing through the various stages and before direct instruction begins children should "evolve and refine his own patterns of spelling, much as he evolved and refined the patterns of spoken language" (Forester, 1980, p. 186.). Forester goes on to say, that spelling is best learned "when the child observes a flow of written language and self-selects from this context those parts for attention for which he is ready" (p. 190). While children are at the first four stages of development, the teacher should construct a learning environment

where children can "formulate, test, and evaluate their own hypotheses about orthography" (Zutell, 1980, p.64). Gentry (1982) encourages teachers to approach spelling by providing children with meaningful opportunities to write frequently, creatively and purposefully and to also provide opportunities for children to share their writings with others. Gentry also believes that during this period of informal instruction in spelling children develop the generalizations and conceptualizations about orthography that is necessary to spell correctly. This block of time promotes the development of varied spelling strategies. Forester (1980) agrees that if children are permitted to create, test, and improve their own spelling ideas, the faster they will learn to spell correctly. Researchers who are proponents of developmental spelling all seem to agree that teaching phonics is not a viable aid in enabling students to learn to spell (Groff, 1986). Forester (1980) purports that the acquisition of spelling skills is of primary importance and the learning of phoneme/grapheme relationships is secondary. Other researchers are also in agreement that matching speech sounds to letter sounds is not essential in order to learn how to spell (Gentry & Henderson, 1978, Read, 1971). According to Zutell (1980, p.64), direct instruction in phonics will do little to "encourage essential, active participation and concept development" in spelling. Zutell (1979) also claims that direct instruction in phonics will prevent the children from using other spelling strategies. Gentry (1982) concurs that an emphasis on phonics inhibits the spellers natural abilities to grow.

Even though formal spelling instruction in the primary grades is discouraged by researchers of developmental spelling, is this enough reason for teachers to adhere to this advice? It has not been proven by studies on the developmental stages of spelling that children are more successful when presented with informal rather than direct instruction at these early stages of spelling development (Groff, 1986). Only one study by Beers & Beers (1980) concluded that children use particular developmental spelling strategies no matter what kind of instruction they receive in the classroom. Finally, the idea that teachers should wait until students reach level five (correct stage) before beginning direct spelling instruction seems to be illogical. If children can already spell when they reach the final stage of spelling development, why should children then be in need of formal instruction (Groff, 1986)?

Graham and Miller declare that there is "a large body of research (which) supports the contention that intensive phonics instruction creates greater gains in spelling than non-phonics approaches" (1979 p. 5). There are more studies that support this philosophy than studies that refute this conclusion (Groff, 1979). Since researchers of developmental spelling provide no evidence that contest these findings, educators are faced with making judgments about the use of informal versus formal instruction in spelling in the primary grades.

As research has provided educators with the cognitive and developmental strategies children use when learning to spell, no one has yet determined the best way to teach spelling in the classroom. A myriad of approaches have been

documented and based on the outcomes of these studies, researchers have offered a wealth of strategies that reflect children's developing awareness of English orthography for educators to use when teaching spelling (Bloodgood, 1991; Schlagal & Schlagal, 1992; Templeton, 1991; Wilde, 1990). When choosing a spelling program, it is crucial for educators to keep in mind that no matter how old or what grade a student is in, he or she will sequentially pass through the various developmental stages. If spelling success is the ultimate goal, instruction must be at a student's current understanding of word knowledge (Henderson, 1985; Templeton, 1983). Horn and Otto (1954) proclaim, "Spelling instruction should start where the child is, just like reading instruction does" (p.14). Educators can achieve this objective by organizing three or four spelling groups in her classroom. In order to determine a student's spelling level, at the beginning of the year a spelling inventory can be administered to determine a students' spelling and orthographic development (Bear et al., 1996; Ganske, 1994; Schlagal, 1989, 1992). The information derived from these inventories can then be utilized to appropriately place students in spelling groups and to guide the selection of appropriate words and spelling patterns for each group (Bear & Templeton, 1998). Words chosen should not only parallel the sequence of developmental stages children progress through but also reflect word frequency found in both children's reading and writing (Nelson, 1989). Not only should words chosen be developmentally appropriate

but they should also duplicate spelling patterns that students "use but confuse" when they write (Invernizzi et al., 1994, p.160).

Based on research findings, the self-corrected spelling test has been validated as an effective technique for spelling study. Thomas Horn (1947) declared the self-corrected test the "single most important factor contributing to achievement in spelling" (p.258). Ernest Horn (1967) affirmed, "When corrected by the pupils and the results properly utilized, the (self-corrected spelling) test is the most fruitful single learning activity per unit of time that has yet been devised. It helps pupils at all levels of spelling ability" (p.17-18). However, Horn's statement "when corrected by students" does not imply which method of self-correction is most effective. So, Harvard and Allred (1994) chose four self-corrected test methods that represent those most widely proven as being efficient for use by classroom teachers to assess the spelling achievement of fourth graders to determine if one was more successful than the other. The methods selected were: "oral feedback after each word has been tested (word wise), oral feedback after a list of words has been tested (list wise), visual feedback after each word has been tested and visual feedback after a list of words has been tested" (Harward et al., 1994, p.251). A pre-test of one hundred words was administered to students. Words were then broken down into four lists each consisting of 25 words each. Each list of twenty-five words contained 11 words targeted to challenge the advanced spellers, six words on grade level, and eight words below grade level to provide low ability spellers with

the opportunity to show improvement. The findings of this study concluded that all four methods are an effective tool to enable children to learn and retain spelling words. However, the scores of the groups using the word wise approach showed a significant difference when compared to the list wise methods. These results mirror Eicholz's (1964) findings that when using self-correction methods immediate feedback is more effective than delayed feedback. These results reaffirm previous studies that advocate the use of self-correction as an effective method for increasing spelling proficiency. Based on these findings, educators should incorporate the word wise self-corrected spelling test into their current spelling program to achieve maximum spelling proficiency (Harward, et al., 1994).

Classroom-Based Inquiry is an approach tested by fourth grade teacher Kimberley Wright. Wright was discouraged by the fact that she did not witness her students taking ownership of their learning. She saw no evidence of her student's transference of effective spelling practice to their reading and writing. While working with the Mapleton Teacher Research Group, Wright was alerted to the practice of weekly spelling discussions. Wright decided to replace the use of spelling textbooks and tests with spelling discussions. Once a week, children were asked to bring words they had difficulty with or were curious about to a "class meeting". At each meeting, these words were discussed, compared, contrasted, analyzed and categorized. During these "meetings", the children's observations and comments about the words caused Wright to conclude that the

children knew more about words than she realized. They were aware of the phoneme/grapheme relationship within words, they also were familiar with homophones, and had a visual awareness of words. Each week the children recorded the words they wanted to learn more about in their writing notebooks to enable them to integrate rather than isolate spelling into their writing. After a short period of time and trial and error, Wright began to develop a blue print as to how to conduct these meetings. However, each week, what she envisioned to occur during these meetings was just not happening. The students were having difficulty identifying their roles in these weekly meetings. Finally, Wright decided that she had wandered off course from her original goal to "raise students' awareness of spelling strategies by recording how they got to the correct spelling of previously misspelled words" (Wright, 2000, p. 221). Wright decided that her meetings needed to take a new direction. Through discussion with her students, they reached a consensus to keep charts on different spellings for the same sounds, such as /shun/ (Wright, 2000). As an extension of this activity, a class spelling book was compiled from the information on these charts. "Inquiry based on spelling patterns, the sounds of words, spelling strategies, collaboration, and so on allowed students to take risks with their spelling because the expectation was not to perform 100% on spelling tests" (Wilde, 1996, p.4). Rather, emphasis was directed to applying effective spelling practices to writing. Students were not only actively involved in these meetings but were also very enthusiastic. They worked cooperatively but were guided to make discoveries on

their own. Wright concludes, "Our research on improving spelling instruction through spelling meetings and classroom-based inquiry far exceeded my expectations, and certainly, students took ownership which transferred to meaningful discussions and everyday reading and writing" (Wright, 2000, p. 223).

Implementation of an interactive writing program into a curriculum has a positive effect on spelling proficiency as indicated through a study conducted by Rymer and Williams. They examined the relationship between explicit spelling instruction and testing and transference of these words to self-selected writing. Their study took place in a first grade classroom in a rural mid-west school district. Each morning the children wrote in their journals, freely choosing topics of personal interest. To support the journal writing, every day Rymer conducted a mini-lesson on a word suggested by the children. Rymer modeled writing the word using letters to represent the sounds heard in the word. She encouraged children when writing to follow this same practice or to try to remember how the word was spelled when they saw it in print. During these mini-lessons, new strategies for spelling words were introduced, such as the compare and contrast strategy. Use of the dictionary was also encouraged. Another resource was the children's weekly spelling lists. Besides mini-lessons, Rymer supported spelling and writing development with interactive writing. "Interactive writing is a literacy activity designed to demonstrate for children what writing is and how it is accomplished. It is a collaborative activity in which the students and teacher

construct a meaningful text and discuss the details of the writing process" (Rymer; Williams, 2000, p. 242). During this activity, both the teacher and the child actually do the writing while concentrating on spelling patterns, phoneme-grapheme relationships, and various other language arts skills. The students in Rymer's class participated in a wide range of activities, which provided many opportunities to learn to spell. In addition to these activities, Rymer's school district required her to explicitly teach district chosen spelling words and to assess the students through weekly spelling tests. The use of both an explicit spelling program and a reading/writing workshop approach to literacy instruction provided Rymer and Williams with the opportunity to assess the impact of the district spelling program on the children's writing. Throughout the year they collected data using the children's writing and spelling tests to determine which words they learned through explicit instruction, which words were learned without instruction, which words were learned and transferred to their journal, and which words were learned and misspelled in their journal. Their study showed that the children transferred very few of their spelling words to their writing indicating that the formal spelling program had very little impact on their writing. It was determined that part of the problem was that a lot of the children already knew a lot of the spelling words and they hardly ever used the words from their weekly spelling tests in their journal writing. Pre-packaged spelling programs do not anticipate which words students already know or will need to know when writing. Through examination of the children's journals, it was

evident that the children were learning to spell. This was due in large part to her reading/writing approach to literacy instruction, which provided the students with numerous opportunities every day to read and write conventionally (Rhymer & Williams, 2000). "Interactive writing and the mini-lessons on spelling, became a powerful curriculum in which learning to spell was woven into the real business of learning to write" (Button, Johnson & Furgerson, 1996, p. 448). In contrast to the formal spelling program, this approach built on what they children already knew and proved to be a successful method of spelling instruction.

Results of a pilot study conducted by George Manolakes concur with the conclusions of Rymer and Williams. After analyzing the grade level materials used in a suburban school district, he concluded that differences exist in spelling that may require a greater degree of individualization than what is found in neatly compartmentalized spelling programs and that most of the children already know how to spell a substantial number of the words included in the spelling programs at each grade level (Manolakes, 1975).

Although, research indicates that whole language programs improve children's literacy skills there is no evidence that it is more successful than conventional methods and there is very little research investigating the merits of combined whole language and strategy instruction programs (Butyniec & Woloshyn, 1997). With this in mind, Butyniec & Wolsohyn set out to determine if third grade students would develop successful spelling skills from explicit strategy instruction provided in a whole language environment, from explicit instruction alone, or

from whole language instruction alone. Students in the explicit strategy plus whole language received explicit instruction about three effective spelling strategies: word building, syllabic segmentation and mental imagery in conjunction with their whole language literacy activities. The students in the explicit strategy condition alone were taught the same spelling strategies as the whole language group but were not introduced to the spelling words in context. The whole language group were introduced to the spelling words in context but were never taught the spelling strategies. The study indicated that those students assigned to the explicit strategy plus whole language group outperformed the students in the other two groups and those in the explicit strategy instruction environment outperformed those in the whole language group. These results corroborate the finding that students need to be taught effective spelling strategies and when they are instructed they are capable of using multiple spelling strategies to achieve spelling proficiency (Butyniec & Woloshyn, 1997).

Traditionally, educators administer spelling tests using basically the same procedure. First they say the target word, then they use the word in a sentence, finally, the target word is repeated after which the students write the word (Lehr, 1994). Is this procedure the most effective method to follow when administering a spelling test? Wallace, Shorr and Williams, set out to determine if different testing procedures could improve scores. They conducted a study using one hundred twenty–six third graders from four third grade classrooms at

two schools in Eastern Washington State. Each classroom was randomly assigned to one of the following test conditions: (1) "Administrator Repeat", (2) "Child Repeat", (3) "Visualization", (4) "Visualization Plus Child Repeat". They selected twelve spelling words from a list of one hundred fifty commonly misspelled words. Three words from each of the following categories were chosen: homophones, difficulty with consonants (pitched spelled as piched), difficulty with vowels, and difficulty with suffixes (happened spelled as happened). Teachers followed explicit word exposure activities, which were conducted on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. On Monday, the children silently read a 251-word story, which contained one instance each of the twelve spelling words. During the Wednesday activity, the children found and circled the spelling words in a word search puzzle. Finally, on Friday, the children completed a simple crossword puzzle consisting the twelve spelling words. The following Monday the spelling test was administered by teachers who's classes were not participating in the study. The results of the study indicated no differences in spelling scores of the students tested under the four conditions. Therefore, they concluded that the standard procedures that teachers are currently using in the classroom to administer spelling tests are effective. In addition to being successful, these standard procedures are also the quickest and easiest to use of the procedures tested (Wallace, Shorr, & Williams, 1995).

Many theoretical perspectives in spelling instruction have been discussed and researched. Research indicates that there are many effective spelling strategies.

All evidence suggests, "An integrated program of reading, writing and word study that allows students to apply knowledge at their appropriate instructional levels offers teachers coherent, manageable tools to augment memory in spelling tasks. Students develop understanding of orthographic patterns and root constancy when presented with meaningful tasks at appropriate levels. Appropriate assessment and grounded word study in conjunction with an interactive reading and writing program provide a firm foundation for spelling instruction" (Bloodgood, 1991, p. 210.).

References

Bear, D., Invernizzi, M., & Templeton, S. (1996). Words their way: Word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling instruction. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bear, D., & Templeton, S. (1998). Explorations in developmental spelling: Foundations for learning and teaching phonics, spelling, and vocabulary. The Reading Teacher, 52, 222-243.

Beers, J., & Beers, C. (1980). Vowel strategies among first and second graders: A growing awareness of written words. Language Arts, 57, 166-171.

Bloodgood, J. (1991). A new approach to spelling instruction in language arts programs. The Elementary School Journal, 92, 203-212.

Button, K., Johnson, M., & Furgerson, P. (1996). Interactive writing in a primary classroom. The Reading Teacher, 49, 445-454.

Butyniec-Thomas, J. & Woloshyn, V. The effects of explicit-strategy and whole-language instruction on students' spelling ability. Journal of Experimental Education, 65, 293-303.

Calfee, R. (1982). Literacy and illiteracy: Teaching the nonreader to survive in the modern world. Annals of Dyslexia, 32, 71-91.

Calfee, R., & Drun, P. (1896). Research on teaching reading. In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.). Handbook of research on teaching (3rd ed., pp. 804-849). New York: The American Educational Research Association.

Eicholz, G. C. (1964). Spelling improvement through a self-check device. Elementary School Journal. 64, 373-376.

Forester, A. (1980). Learning to spell by spelling. Theory into Practice, 19, 186-193.

Ganske, K. (1994). Developmental spelling analysis: A diagnostic measure for instruction and research. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Virginia, Dissertation Abstracts International, 55,05-A, 1230.

Gentry, R.J. (1982). An analysis of developmental spelling in GNYS at WRK. The Reading Teacher, 36, 192-200.

Gentry, R. J. (2000). A retrospective on invented spelling and a look forward. The Reading Teacher, 54, 318-332.

Gentry, J. Richard, and Edmund H. Henderson. (1978). Three steps to teaching Beginning Readers to spell. The Reading Teacher, 31, 632-37.

Graham, S., & Miller, L. (1979). Spelling research and practice: A unified approach. Focus on Exceptional Children, 12, 3-16.

Graves, D.H. (1994). A fresh look at writing. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Groff, P. (1979). Phonics for spelling? Elementary School Journal, 79, 269-275.

Groff, P. (1986). The implications of Developmental spelling research: A Dissenting View. The Elementary School Journal, 86, 317-325.

Hanna, P. R., Hodges, R.E., & Hanna, J. S. (1971). Spelling: Structure and strategies. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Hanna, P. R., & Moore, J.T., Jr. (1953). Spelling—from spoken word to written symbol. Elementary School Journal. 53, 329-337.

Harward, S., Allred, R., & Sudweeks, R. (1994). The effectiveness of four self-corrected spelling test methods. Reading Psychology, 15, 245-271.

Heald-Taylor, B. (1998). Three paradigms of spelling instruction in Grades 3 to 6. Reading Teacher, 51, 404-413.

Henderson, E. H. (1985). Teaching Spelling. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Henderson, E. H. (1990). Teaching Spelling (2nd ed.). Boston, Ma: Houghton Mifflin.

Henderson, E. & Templeton, S. (1986). A Developmental Perspective of Formal Spelling Instruction Through Alphabet, Pattern, and Meaning. The Elementary School Journal, 86, 305-316.

Hillerich, R.L. (1987). Spelling: To teach not just to observe. Illinois Schools Journal, Spring, 16-27.

Horn, E. (1957). Phonetics and spelling. Elementary School Journal, 57, 424-432.

Horn, T. (1947). The effect of the corrected test on learning to spell. Elementary School Journal, 47, 277-285.

Horn, T. (1969). Spelling. In R. L. Ebel (Ed.), Encyclopedia of educational research (3rd ed. PP. 1337-1334). New York: Macmillan.

Horn, T., & Otto, H. (Eds.) (1954). Spelling instruction: A curriculum-wide approach. Austin, TX: Bureau of Laboratory Schools, Publication No. 2.

Invernizzi, M., Abouzeid, M., & Gill, J. T. (1994). Using students' invented spellings as a guide for spelling instruction that emphasizes word study. Elementary School Journal, 95, 155-167.

Lehr, F. (1994). Spelling instruction: Phonics, rules, and word lists. The Reading Teacher, 38, 218-220.

Manolakes, G. (1975). The Teaching of Spelling: A Pilot Study. Elementary English, 52, 243-247.

Nelson, L. (1989). Something Borrowed, Something New: Teaching Implications of Developmental Spelling Research. Reading Psychology: An International Quarterly, 10, 255-274.

Ormrod, J., & Jenkins, L. (1989). Study strategies for learning spelling: Correlations with achievement and developmental changes. Perceptual and Motor Skills, 68, 643-650.

Read, C. (1971). Pre-school children's knowledge of English phonology. Harvard Educational Review, 41, 1-34.

Rymer, R., Williams, C. (2000). Wasn't that a spelling Word? Language Arts, 77,241-250.

Sabey, B. L. (1997). Metacognitive responses of syllable juncture spellers while performing three literacy tasks. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nevada, Reno.

Schlagal, R. (1989). Constancy and change in spelling development. Reading Psychology, 10, 207-232.

Schlagal, R., & Schlagal, J. (1992) The integrated character of spelling: Teaching strategies for multiple purposes. Language Arts, 69, 418-424.

Templeton, S. (1983). The spelling/meaning connection and the development of word knowledge in older students. Journal of Reading, 27, 8-14.

Templeton, S. (1991). Teaching and learning the English spelling system: Reconceptualizing method and purpose. Elementary School Journal, 92, 185-201.

Templeton, S. (1992b). New trends in an historical perspective: Old story, new resolution-sound and meaning in spelling. Language Arts, 69, 454-463.

Wallace, R., Shorr, D., Williams, H. (1995). Spelling: Can Different Testing Procedures Improve Scores. Reading Improvement, 32, 247-252.

Wilde, S. (1990). A proposal for a new spelling curriculum. The Elementary School Journal, 90, 275-289.

Wilde, S. (1996). Teaching writers to spell (Special issue). Primary Voices K-6, 4, 4.

Wright, K. (2000). Weekly Spelling Meetings: Improving spelling instruction through classroom-based inquiry. Language Arts, 77, 218-223.

Zutell, J. (1980). Children's spelling strategies and their cognitive development. In E. H. Henderson & J. W. Beers (Eds.). Developmental and cognitive aspects of learning to spell: A reflection of word knowledge, 52-73. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Zutell, J. (1998). Word Sorting: A developmental spelling approach to word study for delayed readers. Reading & Writing Quarterly, 14, 219-239.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Week 1

SHORT VOWEL 'O" WORDS

1. float
2. oak
3. coach
4. groan
5. road
6. blow
7. grow
8. low
9. slow
10. snowman
11. arrow
12. below
13. follow
14. grown
15. gold
16. cold
17. scold
18. fold
19. hold
20. bold

APPENDIX B

Week 2

FREQUENTLY MISSPELLED WORDS

1. people
2. because
3. does
4. been
5. from
6. any
7. upon
8. could
9. another
10. of
11. little
12. they
13. said
14. friend
15. were
16. have
17. are
18. very
19. coming
20. again

APPENDIX C

WEEK 3

SHORT VOWEL "I"

1. why
2. dry
3. cry
4. myself
5. nearby
6. bright
7. might
8. high
9. tonight
10. sight
11. fright
12. right
13. kind
14. mind
15. behind
16. blind
17. find
18. tie
19. lie
20. pie

APPENDIX D

WEEK 4

FREQUENTLY MISSPELLED WORDS

1. what
2. how
3. only
4. use
5. who
6. shoes
7. along
8. work
9. sure
10. once
11. aunt
12. pretty
13. busy
14. none
15. here
16. says
17. cousin
18. heard
19. built
20. come

APPENDIX E

WEEK 5

MAGIC "E"

1. smile
2. while
3. mine
4. write
5. drive
6. life
7. wise
8. chase
9. place
10. skate
11. strange
12. brave
13. stone
14. alone
15. rode
16. spoke
17. whole
18. wrote
19. huge
20. use

APPENDIX F

WEEK 6

FREQUENTLY MISSPELLED WORDS

1. among
2. while
3. word
4. instead
5. often
6. skiing
7. early
8. since
9. trouble
10. country
11. tired
12. color
13. minute
14. easy
15. where
16. many
17. receive
18. guess
19. buy
20. close

List 122. SPELLING DEMONS—ELEMENTARY

Those who study children's spelling errors and writing difficulties have repeatedly found that a relatively small number of words make up a large percentage of all spelling errors. Many commonly misspelled words are presented in this Spelling Demons list. Other lists in this book, such as Homophones, Instant Words, and Subject Matter Words, can also be used as spelling lists.

about
address
advise
again
all right
along
already
although
always
among
April
arithmetic
aunt
awhile
balloon
because
been
before
birthday
blue
bought
built
busy
buy
children
chocolate
choose
Christmas
close
color
come
coming
cough
could
couldn't
country
cousin
cupboard
dairy
dear
decorate
didn't
doctor
does
early
Easter
easy
enough
every
everybody
favorite
February
fierce
first
football
forty
fourth
Friday
friend
fuel
getting
goes
grade
guard
guess
half
Halloween
handkerchief
haven't
having
hear
heard
height
hello
here
hospital
hour
house
instead
knew
know
laid
latter
lessons
letter
little
loose
loving
making
many
maybe
minute
morning
mother
name
neither
nice
none
o'clock
off
often
once
outside
party
peace
people
piece
played
plays
please
poison
practice
pretty
principal
quarter
quit
quite
raise
read
receive
received
remember
right
rough
route
said
Santa Claus
Saturday
says
school
schoolhouse
several
shoes
since
skiing
skis
some
something
sometime
soon
store
straight
studying
sugar
summer
Sunday
suppose
sure
surely
surprise
surrounded
swimming
teacher
tear
terrible
Thanksgiving
their
there
they
though
thought
through
tired
together
tomorrow
tonight
too
toys
train
traveling
trouble
truly
Tuesday
two
until
used
vacation
very
wear
weather
weigh
were
we're
when
where
which
white
whole
women
would
write
writing
wrote
you
your
you're

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Reading Teacher's Book of Lists, Fourth Edition, © 2000 by Prentice Hall

APPENDIX H

Pre-Test	Short O	Short U	Magic E	Frequently Misspelled Words	Frequently Misspelled Words	Frequently Misspelled Words
	75	100	90	60	45	85
	45	60	75	25	5	25
	55	90	90	15	15	40
	45	80	95	35	15	50
	45	45	75	20	15	35
	35	65	55	25	5	15
	80	100	100	80	70	95
	75	95	85	45	30	70
	55	55	85	55	25	55
	40	85	95	65	20	50
	60	95	100	60	60	80
	65	100	95	45	55	80
	50	90	100	60	25	50
	50	90	95	40	20	60
	50	90	100	70	50	75
	40	95	90	40	25	45

APPENDIX I

Post Test	Short O	Short U	Magic E	Frequently Misspelled Words	Frequently Misspelled Words	Frequently Misspelled Words
	90	95	100	100	100	100
	70	90	100	90	70	90
	100	90	95	90	90	90
	95	100	90	95	100	95
	70	75	85	89	60	90
	90	95	95	95	95	84
	95	100	100	100	100	100
	100	100	100	100	100	100
	100	100	95	100	100	95
	95	100	95	100	100	100
	100	100	100	100	100	100
	95	100	100	100	95	100
	95	95	95	100	95	100
	95	100	100	100	100	100
	100	95	100	100	100	100
	90	100	95	95	90	100